

Ocean Giants

Pico Island, Azores

EXCLUSIVE SMALL GROUP TOUR

Dates

03-10 May 2025

Prices: from £1390 per person (based on 2 sharing)

Solo travellers from £1550

This incredible tour runs in April/May as this is the best time for seeing migratory Blue Whales off the Azores. Your base will be the Azorean island of Pico, a third of which is a nature reserve, with a volcano at its core.

The main focus of the week is to see Blue Whales of course, and you will have exclusive guide services with talks and audio visual presentations from Oceanographer and marine science researcher, Russell Arnott of Incredible Oceans. You will have a chance to become totally immersed in the whale research process during your time there, learning about data collection, whale behaviour, feeding habits and also get to hear the sounds of the Blue Whale using hydrophones. Our guests are always blown away and inspired by the expert marine biologist knowledge as well as their commitment to responsible whale watching.

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THE BIG WHALES ARE REALLY ATTRACTED TO PICO ISLAND, IT'S LIKE A MAGNET, PLENTIFUL FOOD AND "WHALE FRIENDLY" CONDITIONS SEEM TO BE JUST RIGHT. I FELT LIKE I WAS IN A WILD AQUARIUM WITH WHALES POPPING UP IN ALL DIRECTIONS CLOSE TO THE SHORE AND HUGE SUPERPODS OF DOLPHINS

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Russell Arnott has a passion for marine science and ocean conservation. He is a unique and engaging presenter and has specific knowledge of the marine life and the fascinating geological origin of the Azores Islands. He is a published author and wrote "Ocean Endangered" which explores marine conservation issues and offers guidance to individuals who want to take action and make a difference. He also runs a marine conservation charity called Incredible Oceans and currently teaches marine science at University level.



“ WE LOVED THE SMALL GROUP TYPE HOLIDAY AS IT ENABLED US TO MEET OTHER LIKE MINDED PEOPLE AND SHARE SIMILAR EXPERIENCES. THE ISLANDS WERE BOTH MAJESTIC AND MAGICAL AND I KEPT SAYING THAT WHENEVER WE TURNED A CORNER SOMETHING ELSE BEAUTIFUL GREETED US. WE SAW WHALES OR DOLPHINS ON ALL OF OUR SEA TRIPS AND CANNOT WAIT TO REPEAT THE EXPERIENCE. ”

Itinerary

Day 1 - Upon arriving in the Azores, you will be transferred to the hotel for a welcome briefing and introductions. Enjoy complimentary drinks and an orientation of the local area. Rest up before discussing the schedule of whale-watching boat trips and meeting oceanographer Russell Arnott during the welcome dinner with your group in the evening.

Day 2 - Begin the day with a briefing from our marine biologist before boarding the RIB Zodiac for a morning of whale-watching. Throughout the week, there will be audio-visual presentations about the Azores' whales and dolphins, including the history of whaling and whale-watching in the region. Your onboard guide will offer detailed insights into the wildlife, assist in capturing the best shots of the whales, and engage in discussions about the sightings. In the afternoon, visit the local "Vigia," the lookout who spots the whales and guides the boat's skipper.

Days 3 to 6 - Each morning, embark on a boat trip, adjusted according to weather conditions. Enjoy additional opportunities for excursions around the island between your five half-day sea trips, such as exploring the Gruta de Torres underground lava caves. In case of any weather disruptions, our guides will reschedule your trips for the best weather and conditions. Attend talks and presentations by experts to deepen your knowledge about the Azores' whales, other wildlife, geology, local history, and culture.

Day 7 - Explore the island's beauty and charm on a full-day tour, learning about the local culture, volcanic origins, and visiting the UNESCO world heritage vineyards. Lunch at the vineyard includes local produce and a wine tasting experience. Evening Meal with your guide brings the trip to a close.

Day 8 - On departure day, transfer to the airport from your hotel.



This itinerary involves the new RIB zodiac boats (pictured), which now have a toilet on board!

Getting There

Daily flights to PICO Island or HORTA on Faial Island from LISBON or PORTO (2 hrs) on Portuguese mainland. Some people fly to Ponta Delgada on Sao Miguel Island and take a connecting flight (60 mins)



What's Included?

- Return airport transfers
- 5 half day trips to sea on a RIB boat
- 7 nights accommodation in 3* harbour hotel with breakfast included
- Group meals with tour leader and guide at the beginning and end of the tour
- Guide services and support with logistics at our boat base with briefings on the boats, safety and what you are likely to see with the assistance of land based lookouts
- Audio-visual presentations and talks with Oceanographer and marine biologist Russell Arnott who will also accompany the group on some of the trips to sea, as well as other presentations from the local Marine biologists.
- Full day Pico tour to explore the island, mountains, lakes, volcano with stunning views

Climate



The Azores temperate climate and the ocean breezes ensure the islands are cooler than mainland Europe in the summer.

Winter average temp: 16-19°C
Summer average temp: 22-30°C

Upgrade to the beautiful 35th Atlantic View with balconies, sea views and an outdoor pool from £250pp



Hotels

This holiday comes with 7 nights at the 3* Bela Vista harbour hotel in the local village. This hotel is very clean and comfortable with many private rooms offering sea views. Enjoy the buffet breakfast and dine in a selection of lovely local restaurants, minutes from the hotel.

How to book

SIMPLY FILL OUT OUR QUOTE FORM OR CONTACT US BY EMAIL OR PHONE TO SPEAK TO ONE OF OUR SPECIALIST TRAVEL ADVISERS



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